

Appl. No. 09/806,989
Amdt. dated December 17, 2003
Reply to Office Action of September 17, 2003

REMARKS

Entry and consideration of the Amendment is respectfully requested. Claims 14-18 have been canceled. After entry of the Amendment, claims 1-4 and 9-13 are pending.

The Examiner indicated claims 1-4 and 9-13 are allowable. Applicant submits the Amendment places the application in condition for allowance and does not raise any issues not previously considered by the Examiner.

35 U.S.C. § 102(e)

The Examiner rejected claim 14 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as anticipated by Adams et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,165,975) or Papandreou et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,171,232) or Salzman et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,958,427). Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection.

Without acquiescing to the rejection and solely to expedite prosecution, Applicant has canceled claim 14. This renders the rejection moot. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of claim 14 in a divisional application.

Based on the forgoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 102(e) anticipation rejection.

35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

The Examiner rejected claim 15 under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by Klokke-Bethke et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,370,862) or Veronesi et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,580,576). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Without acquiescing to the rejection and solely to expedite prosecution, Applicant has canceled claim 15. This renders the rejection moot. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of claim 15 in a divisional application.

Based on the forgoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the 102(b) anticipation rejection.

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35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner rejected claims 16- 18 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Adams et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,165,975) or Papandreou et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 6,171,232) or Salzmann et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,958,427) or Klokke-Bethke et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,370,862) or Veronesi et al. (U.S. Pat. No. 5,580,576). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Without acquiescing to the rejection and solely to expedite prosecution, Applicant has canceled claims 16-18. This renders the rejection moot. Applicant reserves the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 16-18 in a divisional application.

Based on the forgoing, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of obviousness rejection.

Conclusion


In light of the foregoing amendment and remarks, Applicant asserts the claims are in condition for allowance. Removal of all rejections and early notice of allowable claims is requested.

The Examiner is invited to telephone the undersigned attorney for clarification of any of these remarks or amendments, or to otherwise speed prosecution of this case.

Respectfully submitted,

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